

# **Michael Evans to be nominated for BGCT president**

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ARLINGTON—Dennis Wiles, pastor of First Baptist Church in Arlington, plans to nominate Michael Evans, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in neighboring Mansfield, as president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

## **‘The best of who Texas Baptists are’**



Michael Evans

Wiles will nominate Evans at the BGCT annual meeting in Arlington, part of Texas Baptists’ Family Gathering, July 29-31. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the African American Fellowship Conference and the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas.

Wiles praised Evans as “a champion of the gospel, an incredibly gifted preacher, a proven leader, an outstanding pastor and a servant in the

community.”

“I think Texas Baptists are poised right now, more than ever, to provide leadership at the national level for Baptists, and Michael Evans represents the kind of leadership that can make that a reality,” he said. “He represents the best of who Texas Baptists are.”

Wiles pointed to Evans as a recognized civic leader who is deeply involved in his community, as well as pastor of a dynamic church.

“He is a great role model for young pastors,” said Wiles, who spoke of Evans as a close friend whom he loves and respects. “I consider it an honor to nominate him. ... He is one of our finest.”

## **‘Ambassador’ for Christ and the BGCT**

[Evans](#) agreed to allow his nomination because he wants to help people outside the BGCT to “understand who we really are as Texas Baptists.”

“As (former Executive Director) Charles Wade used to remind us, we are the presence of Christ to others. As the Scripture tells us, we are ambassadors for Christ,” he said. “I would look forward to the opportunity to be not only an ambassador for our Lord, but also for our convention.”

Texas Baptists want to introduce people to Jesus as Lord, he emphasized.

“We are about the business of saving souls,” he said. “It’s who we are. It’s what we do.”

## **‘A bridge builder’**

If elected, Evans wants to encourage Texas Baptists to be intentional about building relationships across cultural and generational divisions.

“I want to be a bridge builder,” he said. “We are one family. I want us to build bridges and promote that oneness.”

Evans, 51, is a Houston native who served nine years in the U.S. Navy as a reserve chaplain, and also worked in chaplaincy at Dallas Children’s Hospital. He has led Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mansfield more than two and a half decades as senior pastor.

He worked on the BGCT Executive Board staff as director of African-American ministries from 2001 to 2006 while continuing to serve the Mansfield congregation.

Evans earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Arlington, his Master of Divinity degree from Texas Christian University’s Brite Divinity School and his Doctor of Ministry degree from Baylor University’s Truett Theological Seminary. He also participated in doctoral studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southern Methodist University’s Perkins School of Theology.

He is the author of [\*Leadership in the Black Church: Guidance in the Midst of Changing Demographics\*](#).

## **Involved in community**

Evans has served as an administrator with the Tarrant County College District and as president of the board of trustees of the Mansfield Independent School District.

He is the founder of several community service organizations—the BBC Educational Enrichment Corporation, the Hope House Community Service Network and the Historic West Mansfield Texas Community Development Corporation.

He also is director of Life Touch Cottage Ministries, a Christian education

and evangelism organization that serves children and youth in West Africa.

Evans and his wife, Lisa, have been married more than 30 years and have two adult children.